



English Access Microscholarship (Access) Program

The U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur (posts) invites you to submit program proposals for FY2012 funding of the English Access Microscholarship (Access) Program. Please note that the age range has changed to allow 13- to 20-year-old students to participate in the Access Program. The in-country educational service providers, who implement the Access Program, should complete the attached templates provided to them. Posts will review each proposal, request revisions if necessary, and submit each proposal to their Regional English Language Officer (RELO). All Access programs must provide two years of study, consisting of at least 360 hours of formal classroom instruction. Programs are strongly encouraged to include intensive sessions and must include an emphasis on U.S. culture and values throughout the two year program. Posts should play an active role and ensure the participant selection process is transparent, competitive, and gives due consideration to gender parity during recruitment and final selection.

A High-Profile Public Diplomacy Initiative

The U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur invites you to participate in the FY2012 Access Program. Since its inception in 2004, more than 95,000 students in over 85 countries have participated in the Access Program, which is administered through a cooperative agreement (grant) under ECA's Fulbright-Hays authority. The Access Program provides a foundation of English language skills to bright, economically disadvantaged **13- to 20-year olds** through after-school classes and additional, more intensive sessions and activities. The program gives participants the opportunity to gain an appreciation for U.S. culture and values, and is intended to increase their ability to participate successfully in the socio-economic development of their countries. It should also improve their chances of participating in U.S. educational and exchange programs. The program is a high-profile public diplomacy initiative that provides participating U.S. embassies an opportunity to demonstrate our country's dedication to education and mutual understanding.

An informal survey of posts conducted earlier this year demonstrated a need for a slightly broader age range to meet mission strategic goals. Starting under FY2012 funding, Access proposals may include new participants who are between the ages of 13-and 20-years old at the start of their enrollment in the Access Program. Please note that posts should aim for not more than a two year age range in classes, i.e. each classroom, to ensure age-appropriate content and cognitive/social development parity.



U.S. EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

Providers

The in-country educational service provider (provider) is the organization or entity that actually runs the Access classes. Providers can be local or U.S.-affiliated schools or NGOs with the capacity to run English classes and/or local teachers' associations. A provider must be able to receive and disburse U.S. funds and fulfill all reporting obligations required by the Access Program.

Proposal Components

While the Access Program may differ from country to country, the following requirements hold for programs worldwide:

- Access is a 2 year program;
- Access students receive at least 360 hours of instruction over the course of the program, reasonably distributed over the two year period;
- Access students are between 13-20 years old at the start of their enrollment in the Access Program;
- Access students are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and represent the host country's diversity. Access programs are gender-balanced.
- Access students receive a Certificate of Award and Certificate of Completion signed by U.S. Ambassador or other U.S. Embassy / Consulate Officer;
- Providers must submit written and financial reports;
- Providers must complete the Access student enrollment form;
- Providers file completed Access Photo and Video Release forms for all participants (pending parent/guardian approval) at the start of the program.

Successful proposals include after school English language instruction that integrates into the curriculum a strong emphasis on U.S. culture and values through instruction, materials selection and a specific cultural enhancement component. Mission personnel are encouraged to develop creative ideas to supplement and enrich the students' learning experience.

English Language Intensive Sessions

While not required, it is strongly suggested that post's proposal include at least one intensive session beyond the regular after school classes. These sessions are often one or two-week long summer programs but may also occur over consecutive weekends or between semesters. They should include more instruction hours per week than the after school and/or weekend programming the students receive throughout the two years, and not exceed 8 hours per day/ 40 hours per week. These sessions may be included in the 360 total hours of formal classroom instruction. Intensive sessions should combine English language instruction with U.S. cultural activities such as drama, computers, art, music, or games and sports, community service projects, leadership and teamwork training, or tolerance programs.



Types of Intensive Sessions

Access Program intensive sessions are an important activity which can supplement, initiate, or conclude a student's two-year English language programming. Posts have offered new students "First Impressions" introductions to English language learning and U.S. culture. Other posts have held "Graduation Sessions" for students at the end of their two-year course. All intensive sessions should provide students with a window on U.S. culture and values, and their activities as much as possible should incorporate ECA exchanges alumni, U.S. exchange program participants, Embassy personnel, and other native and non-native English speaking partners.

Cultural Enhancement Components

The cultural enhancement component should increase the students' familiarity with U.S. culture and values while improving English language skills. These activities are critical to successful Access programs and should be explicitly included in funding proposals. The cost of cultural enhancement components should be itemized in the budget. Enhancement activities may fall under one or more of the following categories: U.S. cultural activities, personal leadership/career development activities, and community service activities.

Examples may include participation in Embassy community events (e.g. Thanksgiving and/or Fourth of July events), leadership training, a volunteer activity at a local orphanage, etc. Access programs have partnered with English Language (EL) Fellows, English Language Specialists, Regional English Language Officers (RELOs), English Teaching Assistants and/or Peace Corps volunteers for enhancement activities in the past.

Certificates of Award and Completion

Proposals must include plans to present every scholarship student certificates signed by the U.S. Ambassador or other senior U.S. official at both the beginning and the end of their studies. An initial certificate enhances the program by reinforcing the U.S. Government and Mission's commitment to the participants' success, strengthening the USG/Access brand, and motivating the students to attend and excel over the length of the two-year long program. The certificate of achievement at the conclusion serves as a record for the student and provides an opportunity to continue a relationship with participants as alumni.

Key Role of Public Affairs Sections

Public Affairs Sections (PAS) manage the Access Program with the assistance of the RELO. Specifically, PAS is responsible for:

- establishing the selection criteria;
- working with the provider to design the program and draft the proposal, with RELO's assistance;
- approving the proposal for submission to the RELO and ECA program staff;
- participating in the student selection process, including ensuring a transparent and competitive process;
- aiming for gender-balance in classes, or if necessary, across programs or even over time;



U.S. EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

- overseeing the program, including ensuring the completion of the student record enrollment form and developing mechanisms that prevent fraud or mismanagement of funds;
- conducting regular site visits to Access classes and coordinating travel by other Embassy personnel, both to assess the quality of the program and to show Embassy support and involvement;
- submitting reports according to the schedule determined in the FY2012 Agreement;
- obtaining video and photo release forms for all participants, wherever possible; and
- assessing English language achievement and changes in attitudes toward the United States.

Materials for Access programs

The RELOs can work with the selected schools to identify appropriate educational materials for the students, particularly materials emphasizing U.S. culture, values, and democratic principles. Examples of materials are the Office of English Language Programs' low-cost teaching resources that are readily available through GPS Manila, including "Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.," "About the U.S.A.," "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and other simplified classics, and the "Sing Out Loud" CD series. Incorporating these materials into a school's curriculum is another way posts may enhance the cultural component.

In addition, Trace Effects, a groundbreaking new 3-D interactive video game designed by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) for Access-aged English language learners, will be officially launched in October on ECA's forthcoming American English web portal (<http://americanenglish.state.gov>). Trace Effects provides a dynamic English language learning environment using American cultural content addressing U.S. government priority themes, such as environmental preservation, the empowerment of women, entrepreneurship, and science and innovation. In the game, the player travels to different U.S. regions and helps young Americans develop their leadership potential. The portal will include other materials and links for teachers and students.

English, Employment, and Exchanges

Access students benefit from the Program because improved English language skills at any level can enhance students' employment or academic prospects, open a window to a broader world of ideas and opportunities, and allow them to better contribute to the socio-economic success of their families, communities and countries. In addition, some of these deserving students will achieve a level of English proficiency allowing them to qualify for participation in ECA exchange programs such as the Youth and Exchange Study (YES) high school exchange, undergraduate exchange, or Fulbright. They may also gain the English skills to qualify for study in the U.S. under other sponsorship with the assistance of EducationUSA advisers. These opportunities should be presented to students as early as possible in their studies to motivate the students and make them aware of application deadlines.